

ACTIVITY: **WRITING LEADS FOR STRONG HEADLINES**

In copywriting, a lead is the first bit of copy your reader will read after the headline. This is where you need to begin leading the reader down the path you want them to take.

REMEMBER

Leads can be written using specific styles:

- **Summary Lead:**

Sum up what your post will be about using the most interesting facts right up front

- **Creative Lead:**

Use an interesting, mysterious, quirky, or funny first sentence to grab attention and compel the reader to keep going

- **Storytelling Lead:**

Tell a story to bridge the reader from the title to the body

TRY IT OUT FOR YOURSELF!

1

slack

Slack is a messaging platform with robust communication features that allows groups of all sizes to chat and collaborate. It's free for individuals and small businesses, and offers a wide range of integration options from Google Drive to GitHub to social media platforms and more. By the beginning of 2018, it was being used regularly by millions of users every day.

On Slack's home page, they want to appeal to the many different kinds of potential users out there. Since the platform is being used by such a wide range of users and groups, Slack wants to make it as clear as possible that it can work for anyone interested in trying it out. Their goal is to convince readers Slack is worth trying.

Given this information, the Slack writers have already written a headline for the home page, "Where Work Happens". Now it's your task to write a lead to convince the audience Slack wants to appeal to that their platform is worth signing up for. In this case, a storytelling approach might be best. Could you write a lead that accomplishes this in less than 40 words?

In case you're curious, here's the lead Slack wrote for their home page:

WHERE WORK HAPPENS

When your team needs to kick off a project, hire a new employee, deploy some code, review a sales contract, finalize next year's budget, measure an A/B test, plan your next office opening, and more, Slack has you covered.

2

Square

Square is a service that allows you to accept payments from customers over mobile devices.

Let's imagine you're writing copy for Square and are given the following information about one of its devices:

When you sign up, Square will send you the Square Reader (<https://squareup.com/reader>), a small device you can plug into your iPhone that allows you to swipe credit cards for payments.

Square wants customers to know that the Reader device is theirs to keep for free and there are no special contracts or agreements they need to sign in order to use it. All the major credit cards are accepted: Visa, Mastercard, Discover, and American Express. The only fee is 2.75% per swipe, or 3.5% + 15¢ per transaction if you manually enter the credit card.

The Reader also works in “Offline Mode” which means if you can't get a signal to process the payment immediately, Square will still accept the swiped credit card information and process it later when you do have a signal.

The purpose of the product page is to describe the many features and benefits of the Reader, but Square's goal is to get users to adopt the device and use it as much as possible.

Your task for the FEATURES section of the page is to take the information you've been given above and write a lead that supports the headline below. This will require a summary approach to quickly communicate the benefits and costs of the reader.

In case you're curious, here's what Square did on their product page:

FEATURES

Fast setup, no commitments.

Sign up for Square and we'll drop your free Square Reader in the mail—no commitments or long-term contracts.

ALL MAJOR CREDIT CARDS

Process Visa, Mastercard, Discover, and American Express at 2.75% per swipe. Manually enter card information and pay 3.5% + 15¢ per transaction.

NO SIGNAL, NO PROBLEM

Swipe payments without a connection in Offline Mode and pay the usual 2.75% per swipe.